
The mission of a criminal justice information system is to provide timely, accurate and complete data to criminal justice officials, allowing them to make better informed decisions.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Data Group

Tracking Number Examination

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CJCC Data Group

Tracking Number Sub-Committee

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Tracking Number Examination

Background

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI), more commonly called criminal history, CCH, or a Rap sheet, is becoming further integrated into both criminal and non-criminal decision-making. The obvious, long-standing use of CHRI in criminal justice is often exemplified in movies or on television when the investigator requests a Rap Sheet. The less dramatic applications of CHRI in decision making are more removed from the public's view, as when that data is used for pretrial diversion, sentencing, supervision, classification or risk analysis. Even more exoteric is the statistical application of CHRI to support strategic planning, budgeting, resource allocation and legislation.

The number and scope of non-criminal justice decisions based in part on CHRI grow almost daily. While employment decisions made on prospective applicants are the most common use of CHRI in the non-criminal justice community, the frequency of use and the variety of CHRI influenced decisions are on the increase. This escalation often reflects public concerns for the safety of those less able to protect themselves and more restrictive licensing and regulatory practices. Examples of protective measures are laws in many states that require mandatory CHRI checks for those who would be employed in childcare, eldercare or care for the handicapped. Regulatory measures would include national requirements for CHRI checks, such as those for gun sales.

Criminal justice or private enterprise, there is a universal requirement of all who base decisions upon CHRI: an expectation of completeness and accuracy. Whether making a sentencing determination, a choice between two clerical applicants or the qualifications of a caregiver, the decision maker has the expectation that the CHRI is inclusive and comprehensive (complete), and that the CHRI is precise, correct, and pertains to the person about whom the decision is about to be made (accurate). Criminal justice officials and information system professionals have recognized two prerequisites for accurate and complete CHRI: fingerprints and tracking numbers.

The components of CHRI were originally defined in a federal regulation in 1976, **Criminal Justice Information Systems**, Title 28, Chapter 1, Part 20. The regulations define CHRI as "information collected by criminal justice agencies on individuals consisting of identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, informations, and other formal criminal charges, and any disposition arising therefrom, sentencing, correctional supervision, and release." To summarize, CHRI data is *identification* of an individual and *notations* of the processing of that individual. Fingerprints remain the obvious and most effective way to guarantee identity. How to guarantee the notations are complete?

The National Task force on Criminal History Record Disposition Reporting, reported *Ten Strategies for Improving Criminal History Records* to the Department of Justice. One of the ten recommendations was:

To ensure that all entries related to a particular case are linked, and to ensure that, in turn, each case is properly linked to the individual’s criminal history record, **each state should assign a unique, fingerprint-supported number (“tracking number”) to each case** upon initiation of case processing.

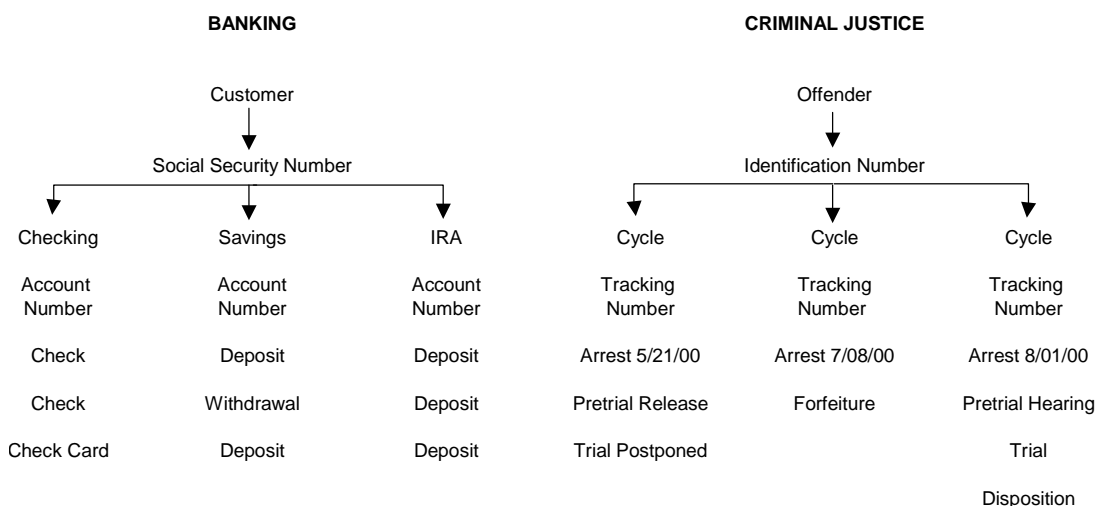
A later report by The National Task Force on Increasing the Utility of the Criminal History Record, in their report to the Department of Justice, included a CHRI recommendation based upon the principle of identification support for all criminal justice “cycles”:

The criminal history record contains information concerning criminal justice cycles. A cycle begins with an arrest, indictment, citation or similar initiation event and contains information concerning the initiating event, charges, dispositions of those charges, and corrections actions in response to those dispositions. **Events within a cycle are linked to the cycle initiation by a unique tracking number...**

Therefore, criminal justice practitioners at the national level have identified the Tracking Number as the solution to CHRI accuracy and completeness problems. But just exactly what are those problems? The primary problem is easily defined – making certain that **all** information within a cycle is collected and assigned to the correct person. One way to view this difficulty is to compare a Central Repository to a bank, and CHRI to accounting records. See Diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1 -

**Comparison of Banking & Account Reconciliation with
Criminal Justice & Cycle Tracking**



Both the bank and the Repository have hundreds if not thousands of “customers.” To keep the customer’s accounts from becoming hopelessly entangled, each assigns identification numbers to individual customers. The bank has a customer number, quite often the Social Security Number; the Metropolitan Police have an identification number, the PDID. Just as a bank’s customer may have several accounts, the criminal offender may have several cycles. As seen in Diagram 1, a bank’s SOC equals the Police PDID; the bank account numbers equals the CHRI cycle or tracking numbers. The accounts of the banking customer will be updated by processed checks and on-line entries, each reporting activities of the customer. The Central Repository CHRI record will also be updated by reports and on-line transactions regarding the offender. A bank’s customer records would be utterly confused if it were not for unique account numbers, individually assigned to a customer. Likewise, complete CHRI is impossible without unique tracking numbers for each cycle individually assigned to each offender.

Problem Description

Currently the District of Columbia does not use a Tracking Number to assemble CHRI, nor to differentiate between criminal justice cycles for an individual.

Any improvement of the District’s CHRI is dependent upon building accurate and complete records. To assist the Criminal Justice coordinating Council (CJCC) and the ITAC, two groups of justice agency personnel were assembled for very specific assignments; one was assigned to examine positive identification, the other tracking numbers. The CJCC’s Positive Identification Group examined the offender identification environment. That group recently completed their assignment and their report was reviewed and accepted by the CJCC.

A sub-committee of the CJCC Data Group was assigned examination of the Tracking Number. This Tracking Number Working Group’s efforts are focused upon how to build complete CHRI records. This group’s activities included determining national recommendations made by CHRI experts and practitioners, examining current practices within each of the states, and detailing current practices when processing offenders in the District of Columbia. The expectations of the group were to:

- better understand current offender numerical and indexing, information processing, and interagency communication
- determine if any number in current use could be utilized a tracking number
- develop a strategy to establish a tracking number if no current number was applicable
- develop a cooperative short-term method to better share and subsequently record an existing number if it proved to be applicable as a tracking number
- outline terms of a long-range plan to utilize current agency system development plans, large and small, to embed an indexable tracking number within each system as a standard recording/reporting process
- use long-term planning to guarantee the uniqueness of the tracking number, and guarantee the accurate transmittal between agencies and users

Tracking Number Definition

Perhaps it is best to start the definition of a Tracking Number by clearly stating what it is not. A Tracking Number does not identify an individual; it is never an identification number!

A Tracking Number is:

a unique number providing a common link for tracking an individual through an entire criminal justice cycle and effectively reporting criminal justice agency actions and dispositions to the Central Repository and allied agencies to compile an accurate, complete criminal history.

The tracking number, by itself, does not increase data quality. Adding an indexable tracking number to an agency's data adds potential worth to CHRI assembled by a Central Repository. However, without a CHRI system definition, without predefined reportable events, without reporting mechanisms, without a Central Repository, the tracking number is a paradox: a solution for a problem that can't exist. Conversely, if the District has all the pieces to the CHRI puzzle, the system, the reporting mechanism, required reportable events and a Central Repository, they will fail to generate complete CHRI without a tracking number.

A Tracking Number has a number of universally accepted characteristics, for example -

- The tracking number applies to a single individual, a single cycle.
Individual: One person; a single entity. **Cycle:** A cycle begins with an arrest, warrant, indictment, citation or similar initiation event and contains information concerning the initial event, charges, disposition of those charges, and corrections actions in response to those dispositions. Although an individual may have multiple cycles, each individual cycle has a unique tracking number.
- It is **NOT** an identification number.
An identification number is a unique number assigned to an individual based upon positive biometric identification. An identification number is not directly associated with a criminal justice cycle. Unlike a tracking number, an individual may not have more than one identification number.
- It is guaranteed to be unique.
Single use number. Structure and issuance methodology prevents duplication at any time. Cannot be shared with another cycle. Cannot be confused with any other criminal justice number within current use
- The supply of the tracking numbers is unlimited.
Virtually inexhaustible. Volume of use cannot exceed units available for immediate use.
- It can be issued by multiple agencies at different locations.
The creation or initiation of the tracking number can compensate for multiple

cycles' initiation points and multiple initiation agencies by allowing decentralized issuance. While controlled through structure and issuance methodology, the number can be issued at multiple locations / agencies / circumstances.

- The tracking number is auditable.
Number can be verified both immediately and following use. Use can be traced from point of origin, through multiple processes, to end of application.
- The tracking number enhances and supports automation.
Number can be controlled, produced, shared and input through automated processes, including computer interfaces, automated edits, printing of forms, labels and bar codes.
- The tracking number is self-checking.
Structure allows both screen and process edits which immediately identify if number contains errors, including incorrect digit(s), transposition, too few or too many digits, and incorrect characters.

Accepted Practices in State CHRI Systems

Although the generally accepted characteristics of a tracking number can be identified, before the Tracking Number Working Group could prepare recommendations for the Information Technology Advisory Committee to review and subsequently consider forwarding to the CJCC, two missing elements had to be addressed. The first is to determine if tracking numbers, regardless of national recommendations, are a common practice in criminal justice CHRI systems across the United States; the second is to determine the practices of the District of Columbia.

A tracking number questionnaire was prepared and distributed to approximately 45 states. The questionnaire with the numerical results is Attachment A. A significant number of states replied to the questionnaire. The aggregate results from the survey follow.

Questionnaire Results: (based upon 35 state responses)

1. 91 % either **use** or plan to use a Tracking Number.
Interesting point – at least 3 state laws require Tracking Numbers
2. 79% of Tracking Numbers are **unique** to an individual.
3. 100% of Tracking Numbers are **unique** to a single cycle.
4. 53% of Tracking Numbers are **computer generated**, or are planned (6%) to be computer generated.
5. 68% of Tracking Numbers **do not** incorporate data or codes.
6. 58% of Tracking Numbers do **use a check digit** routine.

7. 64% of Tracking Numbers are **never** used as agency processing numbers.
8. The processing point within a cycle where the Tracking Number is assigned is:
 - 77% at arrest, booking, fingerprinting, live scan
 - 10% when warrant is created
 - 3% when incident is reported
 - 3% when charges are filed
9. There are four basic Tracking Number configurations:
 - 35% sequential
 - 32% with check digit
 - 25% agency code or ORI prefix / suffix
 - 6% a pattern or internal structure
10. The Tracking Number passed between agencies is typically:
 - 51% pre-printed
 - 27% computer, live scan generated
 - 17% hand written
11. What agency is responsible for Tracking Number administration?
 - 69% Central Repository
 - 13% Courts
 - 9% “all / every agency”
 - 5% law enforcement
 - 3% prosecutor

Clearly a vast majority of states rely upon the tracking number as the means to assure complete and accurate CHRI. The questionnaire results can be briefly summarized: Tracking Numbers are used in virtually all states, all Tracking Numbers are unique to a cycle, and a majority of Tracking Numbers are computer generated or pre-printed, use check digit routines, cannot be confused with agency processing numbers or identification numbers, and are administered by the Central Repository.

At this point the Tracking Number group could determine not only that the national recommendations for the quality and usefulness of CHRI support tracking number use, but also that virtually all states answering the Tracking Number survey use very similar Tracking Number applications to support CHRI. It remained for the group to determine current practices in the District of Columbia and to identify if there are significant alternatives to the creation of a new number to be added to DC practices.

Current District of Columbia Practices

The group initiated the examination of current practices with a questionnaire. This goal of this questionnaire (Attachment B) was to identify the myriad of numbers currently handled by justice agencies and determine:

- Which agency generated which numbers
- The composition of the numbers
- What triggers the generation of the number
- Which numbers are passed to other agencies
- Which numbers are received, stored, modified
- Which numbers are linked individuals, cases, events, activities

The results of the questionnaire (Attachment C1-3) were difficult to summarize because not all justice agencies participated in the data collection, different agencies used different terminologies, and different personnel within the same agency provided different answers to the same questions. However, it appeared that the Arrest Number (ARN) issued by the Metropolitan Police Department very nearly met the characteristics required of a valid tracking number.

- It is computer generated
- It is unique to an individual's single cycle
- It is not an identification number
- It is guaranteed to be unique
- The supply is unlimited
- It is auditable
- It supports automated transfer

However, several questions remained to be resolved before the group could make any recommendations. Is the ARN assigned at ALL points at which a cycle in the District of Columbia can be initiated? If there are other initiation points, is the ARN structured and could it be administered in a manner that would support multiple tracking number assignment points? Was the ARN passed to all criminal justice agencies? When passed to another agency, was there any guarantee that the number passed was valid and correct? Was the ARN self-checking? The group continued their investigation with a more specific questionnaire and upon those results, a flow analysis.

The new questionnaire was very narrow in scope. It centered on only the relationship between each individual agency and the ARN. (Attachment D) In general it was used to determine:

- if an agency received an ARN
- what agency processing, if any, involved the ARN
- if it was kept either in manual or automated files
- if it was passed to another agency

There was no compilation of the results; the information was used only to support a flow analysis and diagram.

The purpose of the flow diagram (Chart 1) was to validate the ARN information gathered, clear up any inconsistencies in the prior questionnaires, and to serve as the information base from which to make a determination of the possible application of the ARN as a tracking number. The flow diagram is very focused. The flow diagram follows a single data element, the ARN, and does not identify or track any activities or processes not directly associated with the creation, capture, recording, or transfer of the ARN.

The Arrest Number (ARN) Flow Diagram

The ARN has nine numeric characters. The first two characters are a numeric code for an “arrest unit.” The third and fourth characters represent the last two characters of a four digit year. The fifth through the ninth character are a sequential counter, initializing at 00001 upon the date counter advancing to a new year. The ARN is computer generated as a response to queries and data entry to the Booking Program.

The flow diagram uses the darker blue connector line to indicate that the ARN that is being passed via an automated process to another file, to a screen, or to printed output, is to be considered valid and accurate. Following the Arrest Booking process, the thin black lines, often with associated red notations, is meant to indicate that if/when the ARN follows this path it should be assumed to be in error. The basis for this harsh assumption is that these transfers are hand written, typed, or manually keyed and therefore are highly susceptible to numerical errors, typing and keyboard errors, poor handwriting, and misreading.

The Arrest Booking Process, triggering the ARN, is the result if the Metropolitan Police Department processing an offender’s information through the Booking Program, based upon:

- On-view arrest
- Service of an arrest warrant (attachment E)
- Issuance of a citation (Attachment F)
- Booking order for an indictment resulting based upon a criminal complaint
- Booking order for an original indictment issued from a grand jury
- Booking order for a judicial summons

It must be noted however, should the Courts fail to issue a Booking Order (Attachment G), an offender whose process starts with an indictment or judicial summons may never be booked, and therefore not assigned an ARN.

In addition to indictments and judicial summons without booking orders, there are two other “entrances” by which an offender can be introduced to criminal processing in the District of Columbia while avoiding the booking process. These two exceptions are the 61-D citation and the arrests initiated by the Marshal’s Warrant Squad.

The offender posting collateral or paying a fine satisfies the 61-D citation. Only in the circumstances where the offender is not offered or does not accept a pretrial alternative will the case go to court. If it should, there will have been no booking by the Metropolitan Police Department, and no Arrest Number.

The United States Marshal Service supports a warrant squad. This squad makes arrests based upon outstanding warrants. When the arrest is made, the offender is placed in the Warrant Squad Lockup and the offender will go to court without being booked by the Metropolitan Police Department for the instant arrest.

As seen above, with few exceptions, the booking process is central to the initialization of all offender processing in the District of Columbia. The booking process is supported by

an automated data collection / data processing program called the **Booking Program** in CJIS. This program generates a valid ARN and makes it available to both manual and automated processes within the MPD and to allied agencies that later process the offender.

The ARN created by the booking program is passed to manual processing involved in the booking process. From a data screen (Attachment H), the user transfers the ARN by hand to the **PD-163** form (Attachments I and J). The PD-163 is ultimately passed to the Corporation Counsel or the U.S. Attorney.

- The Assistant Corporation Counsel does not enter the ARN from the PD-163 in an OCC automated system nor pass the ARN to another agency.
- The Assistant U.S. Attorney enters case initiation data, including the ARN, into an automated Case File. The US Attorney also may pass the ARN from the PD-163 by entering it on criminal information sent to the Superior Court Case Filing process, or by entering it on a criminal complaint sent to the Grand Jury.
- There are no other routine manual processes by which the ARN is passed from the booking process, via the PD-163, to agencies other than the US Attorney and the Corporation Counsel.

The ARN generated by the Booking Program is collected and transferred to other justice agencies through a number of automated transfers. The most universal source supporting those automated transfers is the **PERS LOG FILE**. The ARN generated by the Booking Program is placed in the PERS LOG FILE. The PERS LOG FILE is resident on the Metropolitan Police Department's CJIS system. Therefore the ARN transferred from the PERS LOG FILE as output to a query, is accurate and valid. The most common output, whether as a display, printed output, or data downloaded to another program or system is the CJIS Lock Up List. This output is called a variety of names (CJIS List, Daily Lock Up List, DC Lock Up List, US Lock Up List, Van List) and has a variety of formats and data. The differences between the outputs are at three levels. The first is the result of customization of both the data elements and layout of the output to fit particular agency needs. The second reflects additional data downloaded to the PERS LOG FILE subsequently appearing on the output as the offender is processed by successive agencies. The third reflects the type of offender or the seriousness of the offence listed.

The PERS LOG FILE is:

- Accessed by the **US Attorney** (USAO) as a Daily Lock Up List (Attachment K). This version of the PERS LOG FILE data does not include offenders with citations or those who posted collateral or bonds. Data from the list is used in the Papering Process. Data is downloaded from the USAO to the PERS LOG FILE to reflect USAO processing. The ARN is entered on an USAO agency system, a case impression entry to a case file. The ARN is manually transferred to the Superior Court on a Criminal Information created by the USAO in the papering process.
- Accessed by the **Corporation Counsel** (OCC), the PERS LOG FILE data is presented as a US Lock Up List, DC Lock Up List, and as a Citation List. (Attachment L1-4). Data from the list DC Lock Up List and the Citation List are

used in the OCC Papering Process. No data is downloaded by the OCC to the PERS LOG FILE. The ARN is not entered on an OCC agency automated system. The ARN is not transferred to another agency by the OCC.

- Accessed by the **Public Defender (PDS)** as a US CJIS Lock Up List (Attachment M). Data from the list is entered on a PDS agency system through the Case Preparation Process. The system creates a PDS Client Case File. The ARN is not transferred to another agency by PDS.
- Accessed by the **Pretrial Services Agency (PSA)** as a US CJIS List (Attachment N). Data is downloaded by PSA to the PERS LOG FILE reflecting PSA processing of the offender. PSA also updates a Drug Record on a PSA agency system called DTMS. The Booking Program creates the DTMS DRUG RECORD only for “US” cases. During the PSA Intake Process the ARN is entered on a Case File Arrest Record in the PSA agency system called ABA DABA. When data is placed on the Case File Arrest Record the ABA DABA system also creates a CJIS Info Label. The ARN is not transferred to another agency.
- Accessed by the **US Marshal** as a Van List (Attachment O). Data from the list is used to manage offender movement and transportation. No data is downloaded to the PERS LOG FILE. The US Marshal does not transfer the ARN to another agency.
- Accessed by the **Superior Court (DCSC)** as a Daily US Lock Up List (Attachment P1-2). Data from the list is used in the DCSC Case Filing Process. Data is extracted from the PERS LOG FILE by a batch-processing program used by the DCSC case filing programs. This extract does not include “DC” cases or citations because these offenders were not taken to lock up. These types of bookings are forwarded to DCSC via the PD-163. The Case Filing Process supports data transfer from the PERS LOG FILE extract and data entry to Court automated systems, into the CIS Case Record and the CIS Extract File. Data is also transferred back to the PERS LOG FILE to update the MPD Charge File. The Case Filing Process also allows purely manual entry of data to the CIS extract file from the PD-163. The ARN may be transferred by DCSC to the DC Department of Corrections via a Commitment Order (Attachment Q1-2). The ARN may be transferred by DCSC to CSOSA Probation via an Order for Probation (Attachment R).

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- Is NOT transferred automatically to the (CSOSA) **Parole or Probation** units. While the ARN may be transmitted by the Order for Probation from DCSC, there are no routine or automated transfers of the ARN to Parole or Probation. The ARN is not entered in a CSOSA automated system, nor is it passed to another agency by Parole or Probation.
 - Is NOT accessed by the **Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)**. There is no routine

transfer of the ARN, by either manual or automated processes, by any agency, to the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The ARN is not entered in BOP automated systems nor is it passed to another agency by BOP. A newly developed system that will provide BOP data collected by federal agencies that have processed the offender prior to incarceration in BOP may have a need and means of accessing the ARN.

- Is NOT accessed by the **US Parole Commission** (USPC). There is no routine transfer of the ARN, by either manual or automated processes, by any agency, to the USPC. The ARN is not entered in USPC automated systems nor is it passed to another agency by USPC.

Conclusion

The reason for initiating this examination of current practices in the District of Columbia was to determine the various numbers currently in play and recognize difficulties that might be encountered should the justice community consider establishing a Tracking Number (TRK). Establishing a TRK and integrating it into standard operating and data processing procedures within all justice agencies will be a challenge at best. The risk of failure is reduced if there is an established CHRI reporting process and reporting standards, a tradition of transfer of critical offender data between justice agencies, and automated support for that transfer. The risk is even more greatly reduced when the justice community has current use of an existing number that could be exploited as a TRK.

The arrest number (ARN) generated by the Metropolitan Police Department's CJIS Booking System appears to be that number.

While the ARN is not a data element integral to every possible criminal cycle initiation point in the processing of an offender in the District of Columbia, the exceptions that would now be required to generate the ARN are few. The ARN has a tradition of automated transfer to allied agencies. This tradition includes the customization of reports to fit agency requirements as well as the automated transfer by use of extract programs, and the download of data both to and from the PERS LOG FILE. The ARN has a structure that is not complex and could be amenable to basic modifications to further increase usability, validity, and auditability. These small changes would not impact continued use of the ARN for whatever reporting purposes that might be currently required. The systemic use of the ARN as the TRK would not be automatic. There will be a number of changes that will require implementation at both the MPD and within each of the allied justice agencies, both short and long-term.

The short-term changes generally represent the review and strengthening of current procedures to increase the opportunity to collect and transfer the existing ARN. The majority of short-term changes should be incidental to current or existing training programs, regularly scheduled document processing reviews, and evaluation of compliance with program standards. The procedural review with the greatest impact would decrease the number offenders who appear in court without a booking order being issued.

Short Term Considerations:

1. Agreement by the members of ITAC that the collection of the ARN data element and the distribution of the ARN between DC justice agencies can improve the quality of individual agency cycle records and increase the user's ability to interpret cumulative offender cycle records.
2. The USAO and the DCSC can review Booking Order policies and procedures. If possible, establish a failsafe method by which all indictments and judicial summons are accompanied by a Booking Order.
3. The MPD could train on the use of the ARN as a system-wide tracking number, emphasizing the importance of legible entry of the ARN.
4. The USAO can review procedures related to documents prepared by that agency and passed to any other justice agency. All offender papers passed to any justice agency could have a legible ARN.
5. The OCC can review papering procedures. All offender documents prepared for the court could have a legible ARN. All offender related documents passed to other justice agencies could have a legible ARN. The various forms of the CJIS lists produced for OCC by the PERS LOG FILE, and their delivery, can be reviewed.
6. The DCSC can review the various CJIS list options and consider downloading the citation and DC cases. The DCSC can place an ARN on all documents passed to other justice agencies, particularly the Order for Probation and the Commitment Order.
7. The DCDC can request an ARN be passed by agencies which forward offenders to DCDC, and when passed an ARN, can enter that on CRYISIS and on all documents passed to other justice agencies. DCDC is currently developing a new jail management information system consistent with the development of JUSTIS.
8. DC Parole and Probation, managed by CSOSA, can request an ARN be passed to those agencies which forward offenders, and when passed an ARN, can make certain to enter their automated systems and on all documents passed to other justice agencies.

Long-term plans would be required of both the MPD, as an administrative control agency, and the justice community as a whole. These longer-term plans would include legislative initiatives, a common theme among inter-agency procedures, direct input of TRK (ARN) requirements in all planned automated and manual system designs, changes to forms design, data collection, data entry, and even changes to the ARN itself. Most important, a detailed listing of all associated tasks and agency responsibilities would have to be compiled with an agreed upon "drop dead date" at which all interagency changes would be simultaneously implemented.

Long-term considerations:

1. Formal adoption of a position the members of ITAC, reviewed and accepted by the CJCC, that the creation, collection and the distribution of the Tracking Number between DC justice agencies can improve the quality of both individual agency cycle records and the CHRI for the District of Columbia. The ITAC must agree that the TRK will increase the user's ability to interpret cumulative offender

- cycle information and provide the opportunity for better-informed decisions.
2. Legislation to formally define DC CHRI; establishment and funding a Central Repository to collect the CHRI; delineating specific CHRI reporting requirements for each DC justice agency.
 3. The MPD should be assigned administrative and audit responsibilities for the management of the Tracking Number Program.
 4. The Arrest Number (ARN) should be renamed the District of Columbia Standard Offender Tracking Number (TRK) to signify the MPD is creating this number as the reporting base for DC CHRI, for use by the entire justice community.
 5. The justice community should identify to the MPD each agency, specific activity, and method by which criminal cycles can be initiated for an offender without benefit of booking. The agencies associated with those initiation points should accept responsibility for the generation, assignment and initial entry of the TRK.
 6. The TRK should be expanded to eleven (11) characters (YYUUU99999C), where:
 - YY remains a two-character numeric representing year
 - UUU is a three character numeric representing arrest unit – expansion of this portion of the TRK from 2 to 3 characters allows the MPD to assign specific individual arrest unit codes to all arrest agencies required to report to MPD, as well as allowing those agencies to identify individual units within their agency; this also allows TRK's to be generated, assigned and preprinted from sources other than the booking process at MPD
 - 99999 is a five character numeric sequential counter, initializing at 00001 upon the first assignment of a TRK each new year
 - C is a mod seven check digit assigned by the TRK generation program
 7. The TRK should be generated through an automated process that will not allow duplicate numbers, numbers to be demand initiated, or numbers to be issued out of sequence. The system should allow the TRK to be generated at multiple locations by multiple agencies or arrest units.
 8. Each justice agency agrees to collect the TRK through an automated transfer wherever possible. When an automated transfer is not possible, each agency should agree to collect the data via a machine readable methodology, and lacking that capability, agrees to provide a screen level field edits based upon the check digit, on all manual TRK entries.
 9. Each agency agrees to include the TRK in all reporting to the Central Repository, whether manual or automated reporting.
 10. All DC justice agencies with an automated system agree to add the TRK data element to each existing offender database, if there are no plans to upgrade or replace the system, within the next 18 months.
 11. Each justice agency with an automated system currently in design agrees to add the TRK data element to each offender oriented database.
 12. Each justice agency agrees to include the TRK in the system planning phase of every offender oriented system development plan.
 13. Each justice agency agrees that when passing offender oriented data to any other justice agency, whether a manual or an automated transfer, the sending agency will include the TRK in the transmission.
 14. Each justice agency agrees, when printing the TRK on any document, agrees to

- provide the TRK in both human and machine-readable formats. The machine-readable format should be a standard bar code.
15. Each agency agrees to make presentations at each of the following Tracking Number Work Sessions:
 - a- December 2000, Tracking Number Format, Strategy, and Schedule Planning
 - b- February 2001, Basic Interagency Tracking Number Opportunities
 - c- June 2001, Agency Presentations of Agency Specific Automated and Manual Changes Plan
 - d- September 2001, Agency Presentations of Interagency Changes Plan
 - e- February 2002, Final Schedule Coordination
 16. Each agency agrees to implement agency specific Tracking Number changes as soon as technically and operationally feasible, but no later than December 2001.
 17. Each agency agrees to implement inter-agency Tracking Number changes at 12:01, on March 31, 2002.

Summary

Criminal history record information (CHRI) has two distinct components, identification of the individual offender and notations of the offender's processing by criminal justice agencies. Independent national task forces of expert criminal justice information system practitioners have identified Tracking Numbers (TRK) associated with separate criminal justice cycles as the most effective method to create and maintain accurate, complete CHRI. Virtually all states queried use the TRK with their CHRI systems. The District of Columbia does not use a TRK.

The TRK has a number of specific attributes. An examination of current District of Columbia practices indicates the Arrest Number (ARN) created by the Metropolitan Police Department is currently part of an existing booking information distribution method and shares many of the TRK attributes. It appears the ARN can serve as the base for implementing a TRK in the District's justice community.

For an effective TRK program to be established and maintained, a number of steps, both short and long term, must be accomplished. The first step is agreement by all justice agencies that the TRK is a mutually agreed upon data imperative and a mutually attainable goal. Following that, the formalization of the definition of CHRI, establishing a repository and delineation of agency reporting responsibilities is essential. The justice community must mutually establish priorities, plans and schedules for both the step-by-step and simultaneous implementation of the TRK. The MPD must be assigned administrative responsibility for the TRK program, managing it on a day-to-day basis and auditing to measure compliance.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTENTION:

Dissemination of this report to other than criminal justice officials is not authorized, and is prohibited by the Information Technology Advisory Committee of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

If circulated to noncriminal justice entities, all attachments must be removed to prevent potential, inadvertent harm to persons identified in any attachment.

Some of the attachments supplementing this report provide examples of various actual reports currently in use. While care has been taken with some examples to remove personal identifiers of alleged offenders, other examples would lose all value were personal identifiers removed.